

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 24 October 2019.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs M L Beuttell, R Fuller and J M Palmer.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J A Gray and D M Tysoe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors D Keane and J Neish.

35 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 19th September and 8th October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

37 ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLANDS - OUTLINE TRANSPORT STRATEGY : FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Planning Services Manager – Growth (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which provided an outline of England's Economic Heartland's Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement which included its aims and objectives and a draft consultation response on issues that affect the Huntingdonshire District Area, its corporate priorities and objectives.

Following a brief introduction by the Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that delegated authority to submit the Council's final consultation comments on England's Economic Heartlands Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement be given to the Planning Service Manager – Growth, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

38 FINAL REPORT OF THE ACCELERATING THE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

(Councillor S J Corney was in attendance for consideration of this item).

The Cabinet considered the final report of the Task and Finish Group appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) on Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

Councillor S J Corney, Lead Member of the Task and Finish Group advised that the proposed recommendations intended to generate more awareness of the work already undertaken by the Council in the delivery of affordable housing rather than the acceleration of it. In discussing the fourth recommendation, it was agreed that this should not be endorsed in light of the fact that statistics on homelessness and the number of affordable homes completed were already sent to Members.

Having thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report, the Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development commented upon the omission of his involvement in the study which might have resulted in slightly different outcomes. Nevertheless, Councillor Fuller expressed his support for the first three recommendations proposed.

In concurring with the view that Housing Associations needed to be more proactive in their approaches to delivering affordable housing, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that, whilst recognising the importance of Rural Exception sites in providing affordable housing to areas that need them, the Council should not be reliant on them in order to accelerate and increase the delivery of affordable housing;
- (b) that the Council should continue to support Rural Exception Sites and promote the opportunities they will bring in providing affordable housing to rural areas; and
- (c) that the Council should continue to review and, if practicable, pursue the opportunities that partnership working with Housing Associations offer in accelerating the development of affordable housing. In particular, the Council should continue to encourage and support Housing Associations in securing sites in their own right resulting in less reliance on developers.

39 LIFELONG HEALTH TASK AND FINISH GROUP - PART ONE FINAL REPORT

(Councillor Mrs S Smith was in attendance for consideration of this item).

A report by the Task and Finish Group appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships) was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to consider the initial findings of the study into Lifelong Health.

In introducing the report, Councillor Mrs S Smith, Member of the Task and Finish Group, drew attention to the aims of the review and apprised the Cabinet with the outcome of site visits undertaken at Little Paxton and Yaxley Parish Councils.

She then went on to outline that a future area for examination would be to investigate the fear of benefit claimants at losing income if they were to adopt healthier and active lifestyles.

In response to questions raised by the Executive Leader querying whether there would be any slippages in the proposed timetable of activities outlined in paragraph 6.3, it was agreed that the scope of further work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group should be reviewed and refined at its next meeting.

In recognising the work undertaken at Little Paxton Parish Council, comment was made by the Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Wellbeing that the success of initiatives in local areas were dependent on the enthusiasm and dedication of volunteers which would be difficult to achieve across the District. It was also confirmed that the Head of Leisure and Health had been invited to attend and contribute at Task and Finish Group meetings.

Having agreed to minor changes to the wording of the third recommendation, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to produce and distribute an electronic guide for Parish Councils in order to encourage them to install their own health and sport facilities;
- (b) to include on the agenda of the next Parish Conference a section which highlights the experiences of Little Paxton and Yaxley;
- (c) that the Leisure and Health Service should continue to regularly liaise with Parish Councils and Community Groups, in order to establish what events are taking place and attend them to promote the Council's health and well-being offer; and
- (d) to support the continuation of the Task and Finish Group and note the timetable contained in paragraph 6.3 of the report now submitted on the understanding that the scope of further work is reviewed and refined at its next meeting.

Chairman